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Sir *RICHARD COCKS*
HIS
CHARGE
TO THE
GRAND-JURY

Of the COUNTY of
GLOUCESTER,

At the GENERAL
QUARTER-SESSIONS

Held for that COUNTY,

April the 30th 1717.



L O N D O N,

Printed by *Samuel Palmer*, and Sold by *J. ROBERTS*
at the *Oxford-Arms* in *Warwick-lane.* MDCCXVII.

(Price 3 d.)

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CHARGE, &c.

GENTLEMEN,



A M commanded by the
King's Proclamation, to en-
 force and recommend to you
 the indispensable Obligations
 you lye under, of becoming
 a sober and religious People.
 It is the Interest of Princes, to
 make their Subjects virtuous ; for by this means
 the End of all Laws may be answer'd, with-

out having recourse to Severities. The Design of all human Laws is, To secure Property, to oblige Men out of fear of Penalties, to live honestly and justly, and to honour and obey their Superiors. But these can restrain no further, than the Fear and Danger of being discovered can make Impressions on us ; whereas if Men were really virtuous and good, there would be no occasion for Penalties to awe them ; for no Privacy or Security whatsoever can tempt a good Man to do the least Injustice to any one, much less Acts of Violence and Oppression. As for what concerns a future State, that being properly the Business of the Clergy, I will not invade their Province. But since so many of them are graciously pleased to honour this Court, and are ready upon all occasions to assist us ; I will beg leave for once to take a Text out of the Bible, to be the Foundation of my following Discourse. *When thou takest any matter in hand, consider the End thereof, and thou shalt never do amiss.* Though upon Second Thoughts I find I had no Occasion to ask this Favour, since we have the Remark of an old wise Lawyer much to the same Purpose ; *That a wise Man begins all his Actions from the End.* To illustrate this by Example. Did but Men consider the unhealthfulness, Poverty, and other ill Consequences, that necessarily attend Drunkenness, they wou'd
not

not so often put their Hands with full Glasses to their Mouths. The *Stat. of King James the First* against this detestable Sin of Drunkenness, is very proper for your Perusal. Did but Men consider the Scandal and Ignominy, that they bring upon themselves, by profane Cursing and Swearing, besides the Folly of offending God thereby, and rendring themselves liable to Temporal Penalties, without the least Profit or Pleasure; they would certainly unanimously agree, to leave off this ridiculous Vice. In short, if Men wou'd but seriously reflect upon the easy and happy Circumstances, the Credit and Reputation of Good Men on the one Hand, and on the other upon the Poverty, the Shame, the Fears and the Punishments that are the constant Companions of the Wicked, they would soon determine which to chuse. But the want of this great Lesson of Consideration has too often involv'd us in many publick, as well as private Calamities, and plunged us into almost insuperable Difficulties. We have seem'd of late and do still in some measure, to be one of those Enchanted Islands, that the Poets so much talk of. We have seen Men of no Religion, Immoral, Profane, Atheistical Wretches pretend to be exceedingly zealous for the *Church*; and these have so infatuated many others amongst us, with the Fears and Apprehensions of the *Church's* Danger; That under pretence of preserving that *Church*,
which

which is the Bulwark of the *Protestant* Religion (for so I may truly call the *National Established Church*) they have prevail'd upon their Followers, to expose their Lives and Fortunes, in order to Depose and Murther a Just, Good, and Gracious Protestant Prince, Zealously affected to that *Church*; and to set in his Place a *Popish Pretender*, educated in arbitrary *French* Principles, instructed in all the cruel Arts of *Poper*y, and supported at that very time by a Pension he received from the *Pope*: And under pretence of restoring to you your Liberties and Properties (which you never enjoy'd in a more ample manner, and which by the Blessing of God were never more safe and secure to you than under the present just Possessor of the Crown) they have invited over a desperate Tyrant, and a poor starv'd beggarly People, to join with these *Well-wishers* to their Country. Good God! that any Men should be so bewitched, as to swallow such Absurdities as these are. *Gentlemen*, our All is at Stake, I will speak plain Truths to you, and leave them for you to reflect on. If we do not put a stop to these Proceedings, we are in the worst Circumstances imaginable: 'Tis better to dye once, than to live always in Fear, and under the Burthen of heavy Taxes, occasion'd by the Plots and Villanies of these Men. You find that the Examples which have been made of some few of them,

have

have by no means awed or terrified the rest; nor has the Clemency shewn to the much greater part of them, in the least softned or obliged this wicked restless Faction. The best of Princes is not safe on his Throne; nor can we hope to be quiet in our Possessions, till this Party is entirely crushed. This last Design of theirs in invading over the *King of Sweden*, is a Demonstration of the unaccountable Temper, and the implacable Malice of these Men. For if that *wise Scheme* had succeeded, not only the Nation must have been inevitably ruined, but even they themselves who projected it, would have most certainly been involved in the general Desolation. It would not I think be altogether foreign, nor I hope ungrateful to you, since you have heard so much of the *Swedes*, to give you a short Account of them. Every one will tell you that the *King of Sweden* is a most extravagant arbitrary Prince, and almost distracted with his Ambition, and Disappointments; That his Ambition hath entirely ruined his Country, and that his People are poor beggarly Slaves. But I will carry you a little further back. In the Year 1587. They had a *Protestant King*, called *John III.* But his *Queen Catherine* was a *Papist*; and she by the King's Negligence, or perhaps Connivance, for some politick Ends, bred up their eldest Son, *Sigismund*, a *Papist*. *Stephen Bathor* the then

then *King of Poland* dyes, and *Sigismund*, as a Papist, being qualified to be chosen, was elected *King of Poland*. *King John* dyed in 1592. and to oblige his Subjects, and to shew them, that he took more care of their Religion than his Sons ; He by his Will appoints his Brother, *Charles Duke of Finland*, who was a zealous Protestant, to be Regent of *Sweden* in his Son's Absence. But *Sigismund* did not approve of *Charles* or his Regency ; he therefore goes himself into *Sweden*, takes away the Churches from the Protestants, and gives them to the Papists ; and committed many other Acts of Violence and Injustice, in order to establish Popery. These Proceedings of *Sigismund* obliged *Charles* and the Swedes, to have recourse to Arms to defend their Religion and Laws : and such was their Success, that in 1595. they brought *Charles* to Terms, prevailed on him to take the Coronation Oath, and to swear to govern that Kingdom according to the Laws thereof, and to do nothing without the Advice of his Uncle *Charles*, and the Parliament. After this he returns into *Poland*, soon repents him of his Contract, and by the Assistance of the Poles, enters *Sweden* again in an hostile Manner, turns the Protestants out of more Churches, and gives them to the Papists as before ; plunders their Towns, storms their Castles, and commits great Ravage and Devasta-

Devastation. His Souldiers without Check or Controul, ravished Young Women in the Sight of their Parents, and tyed married Women to Stakes, and forced them before their Husbands Faces. The *Swedes* provoked by such Usage, take up Arms again in their own Defence, and beat *Sigismund* back into *Poland*. To which Success their own Valour or Conduct did not so much contribute, as *Sigismund's* having exasperated the People against him, by his Breach of Oaths and publick Faith, and by his intolerable Cruelties and Barbarities ; all which were demonstrably the Effects of his Religion, and his Education under the Discipline of Popish Priests. For *Sigismund* was not of a more cruel Disposition than other Princes his Co-temporaries, for he and the *Poles* agreed as well as their Kings and they used to do. But his Religion commanded him to govern *Protestants* with a Rod of Iron, and he thought it his Duty to scourge them with Scorpions. It was not only an usual Saying, but a fundamental Law amongst the *Goths* and *Vandals*, *That Kings were made for the People and not the People for Kings* ; and accordingly whenever a *King* degenerated into a *Tyrant*, they deposed him, and elected a new One into his Place. According to this Rule, The *Swedes* had deposed *Errick* who was elder Brother to *John*, for his Cruelty and ill Government, and

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made *John* King in his Stead. And in the same manner now, being quite tired out with the arbitrary Government of *Sigismund*, and perceiving no Hopes of his Amendment, they took up a Resolution to Dethrone him; and pursuant thereto, in the Year 1604, The Swedish Parliament abrogated his Regal Power, because, contrary to the Laws of his Country, he endeavoured to alter their Religion, usurp'd upon their Rights and Liberties, and attempted to govern by a Standing-Army. *Sigismund* had a Brother whose Name was *John*, a Protestant and an Enemy to *Sigismund's* Proceedings; but being young, and thinking himself unable to contend with the Difficulties of the Times, he waved his Pretensions to the Crown. Therefore in April 1604, *Charles* was elected King, and the Senate, the Bishops, the Nobles, the Clergy, the Heads of the University, and the Heads of all the great Cities ratified and confirmed the same in spite of all the whimsical, nonsensical Notions of an *unalienable, indefeasible hereditary Right*. And for their future Preservation, they made these Laws, first, *That no Papist should be capable of inheriting the Crown*; next, *That no King should marry a Papist*; and then they intailed the Crown on *Charles* and his Issue, being Protestants; and for want of such Issue, on the Protestant Issue of *Gustavus* the Father of *John*, and excluded only *Sigismund* and his

his Issue; and under this Settlement the present *King of Sweden* now claims the Crown. From whence I cannot but observe, to what a pitch of Impudence the *Swedish Ministers* are arrived, who mentioning the *Pretender* in their Printed Letters, say, that their *King* believes him to have a Right to the *British Throne*: If he thinks so, it is demonstrable, that he has no Right to the *Crown of Sweden*, for he is descended from that very *Charles* whom the *Parliament* put in the Place of *Sigismund*. Never were two Titles more alike, only *King GEORGE*'s stands upon the much better foot; for in *Sweden* there are *Protestants* now in being before the Family of the present *King*, and besides the *King of Sweden*'s Grandfather had an hand in deposing *Sigismund*. Whereas neither *King GEORGE*, nor any of his Family were concerned at all in deposing *King James*, nor in making themselves his Successors; and *King GEORGE* is the next Protestant Heir. Happy had it been for this Nation had we excluded the *Duke of York*, which many of our bravest Patriots attempted, and for which Attempt too much of our best British Blood has been shed by pack'd Juries, and other Violences, under Colour of Law. There is no doubt but a *Popish Heir* may be as well and as lawfully excluded as a *Popish Prince* deposed; and certainly it is better to prevent a Distemper,

than to run the Hazard of curing it. But the *then King* was too much under the Influence of his *Popish Mother*, and too much addicted to that Religion, to let such a Bill pass: The throwing out of which, (as we cannot but be now sensible) has brought so many Calamities upon this Nation. The Experience of all Ages may convince us, that *Papists* know no Obligations of Gratitude, and are to be bound by no Oaths. The fiery persecuting Reign of *Queen Mary*, is a dismal Example of this sort; who made those very Persons the first Objects of her Fury, who were most instrumental in bringing her to the Throne, and to whom she had made the most solemn Promises. We may guess at their good Nature by the repeated Plots and Designs against the Life of *Queen Elizabeth*, tho' one of the best of *Queens*, and in whom even *they* could not find a Fault but *that* of being a *Protestant*. Their *Gun-Powder Treason Plot* in the Reign of *King James I.* their *Irish Massacre* in *King Charles I.* Time, and their Hellish Plots and Designs in the Time of *King Charles II.* (who tho' their Friend would not run their Lengths) are so many remarkable Instances, of what we must expect from these Men, whenever they get uppermost. We all remember, or have heard at least of the Attempts that *King James II.* made not only to change our Religion, but

but to overturn our Laws and Constitution, in defiance of the most solemn Oaths and Protestations ; tho' he was famed for a strict Observer of his Word. Every one owns ours to be a *limited Monarchy*, and I would be glad to hear any Rational Man give me any fair Distinction betwixt absolute and limited Monarchy ; If in the latter the Prince may dispense with the Laws, and govern by a standing Force, and yet the oppressed People are obliged calmly to submit to him, and must make use of no Remedy but Patience. The Safety and Preservation of the Community, was the End and Design of Government, and consequently if it happens to fall into such hands, as make use of their Power in such a manner as inevitably tends to the Destruction of the Community, they have no doubt a Right to defend themselves against such illegal Governors. As for Example, When a Prince is Lunatick or Defective in his Understanding, and thereby incapacitated to govern, he may not only be deprived of his Power, but may, and ought to be governed himself. And if there is a stronger and more pernicious Incapacity than Madness or Folly, surely there is in such Case more Reason to remove a Prince from his Regal Office ; and such a Incapacity is *Popery*, where the Subjects are *Protestants*. A Madman may possibly destroy himself, or wound, or kill this or
that

that Man, as his frantick Humour directs him. But a *Papist* is by his Religion obliged to destroy and root out *all Protestants*; and that the Practice of *Popish Princes* has been agreeable to this Principle, any one that is skilled in History will perceive. Since the *Reformation*, more *Christians* have been butcher'd by Massacres, Inquisitions, and other barbarous and inhumane Executions of *Papists*, than were destroyed by all the *Pagan Persecutions*. All *Papists* not only hold it justifiable, but highly meritorious to destroy *Hereticks*, and that all Oaths and Promises (which the *Pope* according to them may dispense with as he pleases) made to such are of no force, and they account all *Protestants* to be *Hereticks*. It was therefore absolutely necessary for our Preservation to fill the vacant Throne, upon the Abdication of *King James*, with *King William* and *Queen Mary*, and to intail it on the Protestant Line; and such proceeding was not only expedient, but agreeable to our Laws, to Reason and Religion, and justifiable before God and Man; And there is no Prince upon Earth that has a better Title to his Crown than *King GEORGE* has to his. All the Allegations and religious Motives that the *High-Church* make use of, are only Delusions, Shams, and Pretences to disguise their Zeal for *Popery*. For I can demonstrate that the Word of God is point blank against them, and commands

mands a legal Obedience to *King GEORGE*. Let us fairly consider the places they quote out of Holy Writ, and let even they themselves be Judges. In the *Gospels* we find that our *Blessed Saviour* commands the *Jews* to give *Cesar* his due. And the *Apostles* in other places command us to be obedient to the higher Powers. We all own, that we ought to have more regard for Religion and the Word of God, than any worldly Interest whatsoever. Let us then, to enable us to judge of these Matters, inquire into *Cesar's* Title, the Power that was then in being. The first *Cesar* usurped upon the Rights and Liberties of the freest and the bravest People in the World, and thro' a Scene of Villany, and a Sea of Blood, became at last their Master. But the *Romans* not us'd to Slavery, and so not easily brooking it, Stabbed this *Cesar* in the Senate-House; and were in some hopes that they should have recovered their expiring Liberties thereby. But *Cesar* had before his Death, by his Will adopted his Nephew *Augustus*; who at a vast Expence of the best Blood, not only of the *Romans*, but of the World, established Tyranny in *Rome*. *Augustus* adopted *Tiberius*, no ways related to him. *Augustus* dies, *Tiberius* succeeds: Our Saviour was Born in the Time of *Augustus*, and Suffered in the Reign of *Tiberius*. And this is the Title of the *Cesars*

to

to whom our *Saviour* commands the *Jews* to pay Tribute; and these the Powers to whom the *Apostles* enjoyned a strict Obedience and Submission. Now let us examine *King GEORGE's* Title. *King James* usurped upon our Rights, would have altered our *Established Church*, in order thereto dispensed with our Laws, and govern'd by a Standing Army; and plainly discovered by all his Actions, that he had a Design to entail Thraldom and Slavery upon us, and our latest Posterity. Besides every one was satisfied, that he had palmed more than one Suppositious Child upon the Nation, to defeat the Hopes of the next *Protestant* Heirs. The Nation groaned under these Oppressions, and the *Prince of Orange*, who was not remote from the Crown in his own Right, and next of Kin in Right of his Wife, came over with an Army to demand Justice, and to have these Grievances enquired into. *King James's* Evil Conscience disarmed him and his great Army, and forced him to confess himself Guilty, by leaving the Kingdom. The Representatives of the Nation, and all the Legislative Orders, met and declared the Throne vacant, and filled it with the Injur'd Prince, who had expos'd himself to restore us to our Laws, Religion, and Liberties; for which, his Name will be deservedly for ever

ever Glorious : And then they entailed the Crown on *Queen Mary*, *Queen Anne*, and their Issue respectively, and on the Issue of *King William*, being *Protestants*; and made a *Papist*, or any one that Married a *Papist*, incapable to Inherit or Enjoy the Crown. *Queen Mary* dyed in the Life-time of *King William*, without Issue; the Issue of *Queen Anne* dyed also; That good *King* therefore, together with his *Parliament*, in order to prevent Confusion, wisely settled the Crown not on a Stranger, or an adopted Son, but on the *Princess Sophia*, the next *Protestant Heir*, and the Heirs of her Body being *Protestants*. *King William* dyes, and *Queen Anne* and her *Parliament* confirm these Acts of Settlement. The *Princess Sophia* dyed in the Life-time of *Queen Anne*; and *King GEORGE*, after so many Successions, and so many Acts of *Parliament*, to which we had solemnly Sworn, peaceably ascends the Throne.

And now having fairly stated the Titles, I defy any Man to give so much as a tolerable Reason, why *King GEORGE*'s Title is not better than the *Cesars*; and if that cannot be denied, I defy any one to prove, that we are not as much obliged to be faithful and obedient to *King GEORGE*, by the Word of God, as the Primitive Christians were to be Slaves to the *Cesars*. And thus you see, that not only

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by the great Law of Self-Preservation, but by the Laws of God, and the Laws of the Land, King G E O R G E is our Lawful and Rightful King; and as such we ought to Defend and Obey him. And it is evident past all Contradiction, that the pretended Danger of the *Church*, and the other religious Arguments of *High-Church*, are but mere Pretences and Inventions, which favour of nothing but *Arbitrary Power*, *Popery*, *Self-Interest*, *Revenge*, and *Disappointments*. Having given you already such convincing Arguments, I am almost ashamed to offer others, that I own are not of so much weight. But Experience teaches us, that Arguments drawn from Interest have generally the most Influence. Now all of you have both seen and felt the great Charge and Expence these restless *High-Church* Plotters put us to this last Year, by inviting over the *Pretender*. We paid two Shillings in the Pound extraordinary upon Land on that Account: And your Pockets must of Necessity suffer again this Year, by their inviting Over the *Swedes*. This restless Faction is marvellously Fanciful; and, if you are but tolerably civil to them, they conclude that they have caught and inveagled you, and that you will join with them to ruine your *King*, your *Country*, and your *Religion*. Thus you may see by the *Swedish* Letters, that they

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concluded the *Czar* would assist the *Swedes*, Because some Years ago, He took a Scotchman into his Family, of the same Name, as one of the *Scotch* Rebels. And for as wise Reasons they fancied, there were amongst Us Nine out of their Senses, for one considering Person; *that is*, Nine *Protestants* to One, for the *Pretender* against *King GEORGE*. In order therefore to convince them to the Contrary, you ought on all Occasions, to shew your Dislike both of them, and their Practices; and to oppose them in every thing Privately and Publickly. *Gentlemen*, If you desire to live Long, and see good Days; If you would be happy and secure in the peaceable and quiet Enjoyment of your Liberties, Properties, and Religion, and freed from the heavy Burthen of Taxes; 'Tis in your own power to obtain these Blessings. And in order thereto, You have nothing now to do, but to become a sober and a religious People, grateful to Heaven for your wonderful Deliverances, and the greatest Felicity that can be conferred on any Nation; a *Wise and a just Prince*, and a *hopeful Prospect*, that *future Ages* will be happy in *his Posterity*. I shall conclude with a Sentence which you all know, and which I wish you would heartily observe.

Fear God, and Honour the King, and meddle not with them that are given to change.

F I N I S.

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